

Reading Skills.

Skimming refers to the process of reading only main ideas within a passage to get an overall impression of the content of a reading selection.

How to Skim:

- * Read the title.
- * Read the introduction or the first paragraph.
- * Read the first sentence of every other paragraph.
- * Read any headings and sub-headings.
- * Notice any pictures, charts, or graphs.
- * Notice any italicized or boldface words or phrases.
- * Read the summary or last paragraph.

Scanning is a reading technique to be used when you want to find specific information quickly. In scanning you have a question in your mind and you read a passage only to find the answer, ignoring unrelated information.

How to Scan:

- * State the specific information you are looking for.
- * Try to anticipate how the answer will appear and what clues you might use to help you locate the answer. For example, if you were looking for a certain date, you would quickly read the paragraph looking only for numbers.
- * Use headings and any other aids that will help you identify which sections might contain the information you are looking for.

* Selectively read and skip through sections of the passage.

How to improve your vocabulary and writing skills

You can try these ideas to build your vocabulary:

1. Learn the roots of words

To build a strong foundation for your vocabulary, it's helpful to understand the roots of words. Many words have a common root and a prefix or suffix that helps you determine what the meaning might be. For example, when a word includes the root "duc," a Latin word that means "to make or lead," you can assume that the root refers to that Latin definition. You'll see this root in words like "produce" or "deduce."

2. Focus on practical terms and words

Some industries have different definitions for words or use entirely new words, which is called jargon. If your co-workers and others in your field use technical jargon, try focusing on building your vocabulary to incorporate these words. For example, some industries use the word "stand-up" to mean a short daily meeting.

You can also look for clearer ways to express yourself instead of relying on clichés that may be difficult for others to understand or skew your meaning. For example, instead of saying "*get your foot in the door*," you could use "*expand your opportunities*."

3. Create word associations

Word associations can help you remember certain words or phrases. For example, the word "gargantuan" means very large. Try creating a sequence with the word, such as tiny, small, medium, large, giant and gargantuan. Forming associations can help you recall words you're learning with more ease. These associations can also ensure you remember the word long

term.

4. Complete regular vocabulary tests

At the end of each week, create a quiz that includes the vocabulary words, root words or other language aspects that you've been studying. Taking a quiz or test can increase your ability to retain new words. Every time you learn a new root or word, create a flashcard. On one side of the card, write the word, and on the opposite side, write the definition. You can practice recalling the definition from the words and vice versa.

5. Take a writing class

As you build your vocabulary, you can also improve your writing skills, which will benefit you in your professional life. Take a writing course online or at a local adult educational institution that incorporates assignments and tests to help you boost your ability to communicate effectively through writing. If you complete a writing class, take notes on any new words you learn throughout the course.

6. Create groups of words

As you learn new words, you can group them together by meaning. By creating these groups, you can identify patterns that make it easier to incorporate the words into your daily speech. For example, you might learn words like affirmative, efficacious and decisive, which all mean positive. By grouping these words together, it becomes easier to recall their general meanings and how to use them in speech.

7. Identify word nuances

Some words have alternate definitions in different contexts. An example of nuance is the word "frame," which could have several meanings depending on the scenario. A frame could be a border that surrounds a picture or window, or it could mean to outline or highlight a certain physical quality. Identifying and

understanding these nuances in language will help you better know how to use the words you've learned in your communication with others.

8. Identify words that share meanings

Different words often share the same or similar meaning. You can create a list of word groups to help you construct new and unique statements in your writing and speech. Some words have similar meanings but don't always substitute for one another, so it's helpful to review definitions of similar words before using them. By varying the word choices in your communication, you'll sound more polished and professional.

9. Diversify what you read

Most people spend at least some of their time reading every day. Diversifying your reading choices can help you build a stronger vocabulary since you see new words from different writers who have varying writing patterns. Adding new texts and options to your reading list can also help.

10. Edit what you write

When you finish writing any professional text, such as an email or cover letter, review your content for repetitive words or phrases. Consider using your expanded vocabulary to replace words you used frequently throughout the document. By editing your own writing, you can improve clarity, style and tone.